United Nations A/67/PV.70

General Assembly
Sixty-seventh session

Official Records

70th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 27 March 2013, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Jeremić ..... (Serbia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Khanda (Ghana), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 31 and 107 (*continued*)

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/67/715)

Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711)

Ms. Burgstaller (Sweden): Sweden aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. At the outset, I would like to thank the President for convening this debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session (A/67/715) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711). I would also like to thank the former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Ambassador Momen of Bangladesh, for his leadership over the past year and to welcome the new Chair of the Commission, Ambassador Vilović of Croatia.

Sweden warmly welcomes the PBC report, especially since it now focuses more clearly on the challenges and experiences at the country level. As country performance is the key measure of success in peacebuilding, it is important to look for good examples among the country-specific configurations that can be considered in the other configurations.

I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and to Assistant Secretary-General Judy Cheng-Hopkins and her team for their dedicated work and efforts. At the same time, we would also like to encourage the PBSO, in addition to carrying out its core business of supporting the PBC's Organizational Committee and its country-specific configuration work in the field, to engage in active networking. That should include interaction with the Secretariat, United Nations funds and programmes, the international financial institutions and regional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States and the Mano River Union. Cooperating with regional organizations is particularly important since the PBC's work is, to a large extent, focused on countries within the same geographic space. The active participation of regional organizations is crucial to the PBC performing well and relating to all actors in the region.

We also welcome the Secretary-General's report on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). Since the launch of the PBF in 2006, Sweden has been one of the Fund's core donors. From the start, the PBF has evolved continuously.

Sweden currently holds the two-year chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group. In that capacity, our focus is on three issues: results, monitoring and evaluation, and the role of the PBF in the peacebuilding architecture. It also entails cooperation with the international financial institutions.

We are very pleased with the PBF's commitment to results and reform and with its steady efforts to sharpen its role as a political and financial catalyst for

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peacebuilding. For example, the PBF has significantly strengthened its work on monitoring and evaluation.

The Fund fills a critical gap, not only within the United Nations but also in the global peacebuilding architecture, by providing catalytic, rapid and flexible assistance. Whereas other financing instruments may be restricted from providing support to political, peace or transition processes, the PBF can engage directly and as soon as the window of political opportunity opens.

The benefits of being able to provide support for political processes that involve a high risk are clear. Among the PBF's recent achievements is its support to the political transition in Somalia last year. In brief, the PBF works as a global gap filler in catalysing political and financial action. The complementary role of the PBF in relation to other instruments has proved to be of key importance in situations where global action is needed.

Investing in the PBC's country-specific configurations yields concrete results. Our experience in chairing the country configuration for Liberia has provided us with valuable insights into the challenges and prospects for building peace in cooperation with Liberia and the international partners on the ground. Having an embassy in that location has been helpful in our effort to provide continuous support to the United Nations Mission and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Closer cooperation between the United Nations and the international financial institutions is key. The World Bank, as well as the African Development Bank, plays an important part in regional peacebuilding, enabling initiatives in areas ranging from youth employment to the management of natural resources and good economic governance.

Our experience shows that it is also important that peacebuilding efforts be integrated within the broader coordination structures of each country. They should be efficient and light and should not be carried out in parallel processes. The PBC and the PBF should reinforce the move towards the United Nations delivering as one. The PBC's work in Sierra Leone provides an interesting example of how that can be done.

The PBC should work towards aligning the statements of mutual commitments with country priorities, peacebuilding and State-building goals and coordination mechanisms in order to avoid duplication and to ensure the effective coordination and efficient channelling of resources in support of the country objectives.

We believe that those are all essential aspects to consider when developing robust peacebuilding structures for the future, as well as when successfully realizing major initiatives, such as the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States.

Mrs. Adhikari (Nepal): I thank the President for organizing this important and timely joint debate on the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/67/715) and the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711). It is a good opportunity for Member States to exchange views and to share their ideas on the work of the Commission.

I take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Abulkalam Momen for his able leadership as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in 2012. My delegation also congratulates and welcomes the new Chair of the PBC, Ambassador Ranko Vilović, and pledges our full support to him during his tenure. My delegation aligns itself with the statement made yesterday by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia as the coordinator of the Non-Aligned Movement caucus on peacebuilding.

Nepal has been actively supporting the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in various capacities. As a member of the Organizational Committee and one of the top troop-contributing countries and given our own experience of post-conflict management, we have continuously supported the work of the Commission.

My delegation welcomes the analytical approach taken in the report of the PBC. The report analyses the challenges and gaps facing us and the way forward in the peacebuilding architecture. It mentions that the overall utilization of the operation and activities of the Peacebuilding Fund was of a satisfactory level. The Fund has demonstrated its logic and usefulness by providing much-needed technical, development and financial support to countries in conflict.

The report also clearly demonstrates the importance of partnerships in peace processes. In that regard, my delegation is of the view that partnerships between the PBC and the international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations, including South-South and triangular cooperation, and other relevant international actors are important to harmonizing the support of such bodies for effective

peacebuilding activities. A strategic development framework must be prepared with broader consultation so as to ensure a better reflection of national priorities. The report rightly focuses on having a single overall planning document, around which international support must revolve.

Our experience in peacekeeping missions abroad and in the peacebuilding process in the country shows that women are not merely the primary victims of the pain and sorrows of conflict, with all the associated psychosocial trauma and stigmatization. Rather, they are peacemakers and the very foundation of social cohesion. Given the importance of women's involvement in peace, Nepal is implementing Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and has drawn up a national plan of action accordingly in order to mainstream women as an integral part of the peacebuilding process. It is good to note that more funds have been allocated by the Peacebuilding Fund for women beneficiaries in the year 2012.

There is no doubt that security and development are mutually reinforcing. There must be a delicate balance between those two areas so as to lead a country effectively towards a post-conflict phase. The PBC must place national ownership and leadership at the forefront of its activities in the field to ensure sustainable peace and development, working together with national actors and stakeholders.

Similarly, coordination and coherence are vital in PBC activities. As mentioned in the report, the synergy between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund must be ensured for effective and efficient financing and for the maximum impact on the ground through the implementation of the target projects. The allocation of sufficient resources on time for countries in need will be a decisive factor in achieving and ensuring stability in such countries. There is no doubt that the available resources must be strategically used.

While the peacebuilding environment varies from country to country, we see many commonalities in the approaches to peacebuilding and its building blocks. We should learn from our past experiences. In that context, the Working Group on Lessons Learned must be developed and fully utilized as an educating and disseminating platform of the best practices and lessons learned in the country configuration and in the wider peacebuilding community. We believe that a better follow-up and stronger integration of findings throughout peacebuilding activities could help to enhance our effectiveness on the ground.

The report of the Peacebuilding Commission has rightly underscored the centrality of sustainable peace and security through a coherent and coordinated response; the need to ensure national ownership, inclusive national processes, gender mainstreaming, youth employment and job creation; the marshalling of adequate resources for peacebuilding; and the sharing of experiences and lessons learned, in particular through South-South and triangular cooperation.

The time has come to redouble our efforts to make the United Nations peacebuilding architecture more effective and efficient so as to meet the aspirations of conflict-stricken people for peace, stability and sustained economic growth.

Mr. Gaspar da Silva (Portugal): Portugal views this debate as a timely opportunity to assess where we are, to look at the challenges the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) faces and to identify concrete ways to enhance the Commission's impact in the field. This is particularly pertinent in the context of the upcoming comprehensive five-year review in 2015. Portugal naturally shares the positions that were expressed yesterday by Ambassador Mayr-Harting (see A/67/PV.69) on behalf of the European Union.

Over the past 12 months, the Peacebuilding Commission has continued to consolidate itself as a unique actor within the United Nations architecture for post-conflict peace consolidation. The reports we are considering today (A/67/715 and A/67/711) testify to that effect and identify areas where more can still and should be done.

Peacebuilding is a multifaceted challenge. One distinctive aspect of the PBC that Portugal particularly values is the way it brings together security and development as interrelated elements of peace consolidation. Making use of those two dimensions and how they are treated in an integrated manner from the early stages of peacebuilding requires bringing our political, development, security and humanitarian instruments into a single consistent framework. In each of the countries where it is involved, including in the four configurations that Portugal is a part of, the PBC certainly contributes to the United Nations effort to devise such a framework.

The PBC's singularity derives also from its membership, bringing together Member States and international organizations, and from its engagement with national actors in the definition of peacebuilding priorities. Its approach, based on a reciprocal engagement between the PBC and the authorities of the countries on its agenda, represents a strong incentive for national ownership of the peace consolidation processes. The launching of a national reconciliation strategy in Liberia, the conduct of elections in Sierra Leone and resource mobilization in support of a new poverty reduction strategy in Burundi are just some of the more recent examples of how successful those partnerships can be when there is broad and continuous national commitment. At the same time, the restoration and respect of the constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau, the reshaping of the United Nations presence in Sierra Leone and Burundi, as well as the current situation in the Central African Republic, pose significant challenges. Those are challenges which, in our view, encourage us all to reflect on how to make the best use of the singular features of the PBC to help those countries to successfully address the root causes of instability and overcome those obstacles.

In that regard, given the overall state of affairs in Guinea-Bissau and despite the current challenges on the ground, we believe that the PBC configuration can continue to play an active role, namely by providing political support to the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau and by facilitating dialogue, once there is a broader political agreement to move forward. The restoration of the constitutional order must be accompanied by a commitment by the international community to the stability and development of Guinea-Bissau. The PBC configuration has a role to play in promoting and facilitating that commitment as well.

Another crucial aspect is political dialogue. The statements of mutual agreement, as well as the visits by the configurations' Chairs, constitute excellent opportunities for conveying political messages regarding the situation in the countries on the PBC agenda. Yet we must admit that further improvement is needed to articulate the political role of the PBC configuration Chairs with that of other United Nations actors — namely, the Secretary-General's special representatives — in order not only to avoid duplication but also to enhance synergies and complementarities.

In that context, we are encouraged by the progress in the interaction between the PBC and the Security Council observed throughout 2012. The advice of the Chairs of country-specific configurations in the context of mandate renewals, for example, has proved to be valuable and should be taken on on a regular basis. But the PBC's inputs should also be considered as an early warning for potential setbacks in peace consolidation in specific countries.

Still, on the issue of priority areas, we believe that the debates on cross-national issues, such as those on transnational organized crime in West Africa, are very promising and represent an attempt to provide a regional dimension to the work of the PBC. In that respect, we also welcome the recent joint mission by the Sierra Leone and Liberia configurations as a step further in that regard. We therefore encourage the configurations to continue to cooperate among themselves, as well as to work closely with the United Nations regional offices, in particular in West Africa, in areas such as the implementation of concrete projects for combating organized crime. At the same time, further engagement with regional actors, such as the Mano River Union, also contribute to better supporting the countries on the PBC's agenda.

The PBC does not aim to provide a one-size-fits-all format. The complexity of peacebuilding as a multilayered, pervasive process requires that a particular approach be adopted for each individual country. There are nevertheless fundamental principles and lessons learned that should frame our work; among those, we would like to underline the strengthening of national institutions. The more institutional maturity a country shows, the better the PBC is able to provide support to nationally owned and led policies.

Finally, in a time of financial scarcity, it goes without saying that the PBC can continue to play an instrumental role in mobilizing donors' resources and identifying financing gaps, overlaps and priorities for international assistance. We encourage further work on the ground through more systematic involvement with other United Nations agencies, bilateral partners, international financial institutions and regional organizations, as well as the private sector. As we approach the end of the current business plan period and the Peacebuilding Fund enters a new planning cycle, we look forward to the 2013 Peacebuilding Fund review.

As always, Portugal stands ready to engage in an open and creative discussion, in particular on ways to advance the PBC's contribution to a more efficient and integrated action of the international community throughout the various post-conflict peace consolidation stages in the countries involved. Indeed, the success of the PBC in fulfilling its functions represents our collective accomplishments towards achieving sustainable peace. We therefore take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Abdul Momen for his engagement during his chairmanship of the PBC and to convey, through the President, our support to Ambassador Ranko Vilović, while reiterating our readiness to continue to cooperate with the Peacebuilding Support Office in order to successfully carry out the tasks ahead.

Mr. Touré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks the President for organizing this important joint debate of the General Assembly on peacebuilding. We commend the President of the sixth session of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Ambassador Momen of Bangladesh, and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for their leadership and the quality and importance of the reports before us (A/67/715 and A/67/711). We thank Ambassador Ranko Vilović of Croatia, the new Chair of the PBC, for his statement (see A/67/PV.69) and wish him every success at the head of the Commission. My delegation also welcomes with much interest the statements made by the Chairs of the country configurations (see A/67/PV.69). I would like to take this opportunity to commend all the members of the Guinea configuration for the actions they have undertaken for the benefit of my country. I also thank the entire team of the Peacebuilding Support Office for their tireless efforts and their innovative initiatives.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/67/PV.69) and would like to make the following comments in its national capacity.

As an intergovernmental body with a cross-cutting mandate, the PBC is an innovation that can contribute to improving the coherence of the involvement of the international community in the countries on its agenda by incorporating the political, security, humanitarian and development dimensions. My Government welcomes the progress made in 2012 by the PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), particularly the implementation of strategies for national reconciliation, the reform of the security sector, assistance for the electoral process, the mobilization of resources and the coordination of international aid. However, those outcomes could be enhanced further, particularly in the interaction between the PBC and the authorities of the countries on its agenda, coordination within the United Nations system, political support and the Commission's working methods.

Respect for the principle of national ownership is of critical importance in the implementation of peacebuilding objectives. In that regard, national authorities should be more closely involved in preparing and implementing the work of the PBC, given that peacebuilding is primarily their responsibility.

My Government also urges the PBC to exert greater efforts in the sphere of resource mobilization, particularly by assisting the countries on its agenda in implementing national mechanisms that can attract consistent financial and technical support. Moreover, the coordination of action by the various actors involved in peacebuilding should also be boosted both at Headquarters and on the ground, with a view to harmonizing the priorities of the parties with those established in the statement of mutual commitment.

In the specific case of my country, collaboration among the Guinea configuration, headed by Luxembourg; the Working Group on Lessons Learned, chaired by Japan; and the Government of Guinea has allowed us to identify the relevant stakeholders and programmes and the overlaps and gaps regarding financial assistance as a whole. I would also like to draw attention to the fact that the close collaboration between the Government and the PBF has led to significant progress, especially in the sphere of security sector reform through the biometric census of the armed forces and the placing of 3,928 soldiers on retirement. Consistent with the principle of national ownership, the Government of Guinea, despite our scant resources, has contributed to funding one-quarter of the cost as a whole.

Meanwhile, the Fund has mobilized the financial and technical resources needed to fund the biometric census of the armed forces and the remainder of the troop-retirement project, thereby strengthening governance of the security sector in the short term by the long-term operationalization of the troop-retirement system — a major reduction of 15 per cent of troops and an accompanying reduction in budgets. The biometric

census has allowed us to identify necessary reforms such as the reorganization of the human resources administration of the army and the census of the police force. Also, the deployment to Conakry of a high-level adviser and a team of experts for strategic support for security sector reform has allowed us to identify greater involvement of national stakeholders in the successful implementation of the national strategy for security sector reform, an improved coordination of activities within the United Nations system and a commitment by the Government to allocate further resources to the security sector in its budget for 2013.

In addition, we welcome the consistent support by the Fund to Guinea in the other two priority spheres of its national programme relating to peacebuilding, namely, the promotion of national reconciliation and a jobs policy for young people and women. With a view to consolidating those achievements, we feel that Guinea and its partners should take advantage of the dynamic and confidence that has been generated by those initial successes in order to pursue those reforms by extending them to other components of the sector, specifically the police and the justice system.

In conclusion, my delegation is of the view that the PBC would enhance its effectiveness by incorporating in its approach the subregional dimension in order to tackle the numerous scourges cutting across the entire region of West Africa that threaten Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. For that reason, my delegation suggests that the PBC should consider the establishment of a permanent consultation framework among its members and subregional organizations, such as the Mano River Union, on the one hand, and the Chairs of its four country-specific configurations, on the other hand.

Lastly, I would like to restate my Government's determination to work still more closely with the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the international community as a whole in order to promote an effective partnership that lives up to the expectations of all parties.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Peacebuilding activities are one of the key factors for effectively settling conflicts, stabilizing post-conflict situations and avoiding a resumption of crises. However, despite the efforts taken in that area by the United Nations through its peacekeeping operations, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), assistance in post-conflict countries continues to be piecemeal. There is a clear need to improve coordination and the division of labour among participants in the peacebuilding process and in making the process systematic.

However, achieving those aims does not necessarily mean creating additional institutional structures or mechanisms. We feel that the potential for perfecting the architecture we already have has not yet been fully drawn upon. The Russian Federation supports the activities of the PBC as one of the key intergovernmental bodies for the coordination of peacebuilding assistance. We see added value in providing, upon its request, qualitative and advisory assistance to the Security Council on countries on its agenda. We suggest that the Commission, in the framework of its mandate, must make a contribution to resolving most cross-cutting issues related to peacebuilding and having to do with the United Nations system across the board and requiring numerous discussions with Member States in the framework of specialized bodies of the United Nations.

Much remains to be done to improve the practical results produced by the activities of the Commission. In a number of countries on the PBC's agenda, significant results have been produced in dealing with the root causes of conflict and bolstering State institutions, coordination and mobilizing resources to those ends. At the same time, the examples of Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic require us to make careful analyses of the timeliness and effectiveness of the PBC's involvement in post-conflict settlements in those countries where we are seeing a general exacerbation of those situations. Unfortunately, peacebuilding did not work there. It is clear that solutions that may have been effective in certain contexts are not always effective in others. In that connection, we would like to underscore the importance of States' national ownership in the peacebuilding process. Moreover, there is a crucial need to maintain — not just in words, but in deeds — the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of post-conflict States and to recognize national responsibilities and priorities in the framework of peacebuilding.

A leading role in ensuring such ownership should be played by Governments, which represent the interests of their societies at large. Peacebuilding activities can be crucial if they are provided in a timely manner and

on the scale required, as well as when they are focused on resolving tasks directly tied to eradicating the root sources of conflict. In the post-conflict stage, we must not only take political considerations into account, but also assist in economic development, resolve pressing social issues and create opportunities for employment, which can mitigate political differences. In that regard, a key role can be played by United Nations funds and programmes.

With respect to the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission for 2012, we would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Mr. Abulkalam Abdul Momen, for his work as Chair of the PBC. The past year has been a busy one for the Commission, and we commend the results of its activities. We are confident that the current Chair, the chair of the Group of Eastern European States and Permanent Representative of Croatia, Mr. Ranko Vilović, will also ensure that the Committee continues to move forward. Yesterday, we listened with interest to his statement (A/67/PV.69), which, as we understand, was made in his national capacity.

The Commission's report (A/67/715) identified a number of upcoming challenges. The programme is far-reaching and aims to increase the effectiveness of the Commission's work in coordinating international peacebuilding efforts, developing recommendations for the ongoing coordination of international support to countries on the PBC agenda, and streamlining its working methods.

We carefully read the report (A/67/711) on the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). We believe that the PBF is one of the most important components of the peacebuilding architecture. That mechanism of rapid allocation to facilitate the collection of long-term resources for reconstruction and development has demonstrated its effectiveness. Russia will continue to contribute $2 million to the Fund on an annual basis. Russia's total contribution has reached $10 million, which places our country among the top donors to the Fund.

Providing assistance under the PBF on the basis of United Nations programmes and projects allows the host country's priorities to be taken into account and ensures that the Fund has the necessary resources to address those challenges. We continue to believe that there must be a division of resources and that there should be no artificial imposition on countries of any sort of thematic projects. The priority areas should be determined by the Governments themselves.

Mr. Dugan (United States of America): We thank the Secretary-General for his report on the progress of the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711) and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for its report on its sixth session (A/67/715). We appreciate the contributions of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and the Peacebuilding Support Office to various peacebuilding processes and capacities.

Let me congratulate and thank Ambassador Abdul Momen for his dynamic chairmanship of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2012, and welcome the election of Ambassador Ranko Vilović as its Chair by reaffirming our cooperation and support and by wishing him every success in 2013.

The United States remains convinced that supporting successful transitions from conflict should be among the highest strategic priorities for the United Nations system as a whole. The Secretary-General's latest reports illustrate the potential of and continuing challenges to the PBC's work. We agree with the Secretary-General's assertion that strong national ownership, a strengthened working relationship with key United Nations actors in the field, and the prioritization of resources are all essential to the Commission's success.

The United States notes important benchmarks for peacebuilding in 2012, particularly the peaceful conduct of elections in Sierra Leone and the launch of a national reconciliation strategy in Liberia. We welcome the PBC's continued engagement in Sierra Leone as the Organization draws down the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone. A durable transition in Sierra Leone can serve as an example moving forward. By contrast, events such as the 2012 coup in Guinea-Bissau and the unfolding violence in the Central African Republic today are stark reminders of the fragility of transitions and the need for more effective vigilance and action by the Peacebuilding Commission and other stakeholders.

Strategic coherence across all dimensions of international response and support should remain one of the chief priorities of the United Nations peacebuilding instruments. That should translate into consistent messages with the countries on the PBC agenda, which would ensure that the international community

speaks with a coherent voice, including in relation to mobilizing resources.

Promoting partnerships with regional organizations, financial institutions and other key actors should therefore continue to be a priority. The United States sees particular potential in strengthened collaboration between the United Nations and the World Bank and the African Development Bank. The tools and resources of multilateral development banks are essential to successful post-conflict transition and need to complement wider efforts to foster political dialogue and to promote reconciliation. We commend the PBC's efforts to strengthen those partnerships and encourage it to explore further collaboration with the private sector, as well as with philanthropic and other non-governmental organizations.

There is also a natural synergy between the Peacebuilding Commission and initiatives such as the Group of Seven Plus and its New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, which could be better explored. Within the United Nations family, we also see scope for the Peacebuilding Commission — together with the Security Council, other United Nations bodies and United Nations presences in countries on the PBC agenda — to articulate better mutual expectations and respective roles. The briefings that the Chairs of the PBC country configurations have presented during renewals of the mandates of special political missions have been productive, and we look forward to more of that type of collaboration.

The United States urges the Commission to seek more consistently active engagement from the representatives of the countries on its agenda. The PBC has a mixed record in that regard. We look to the countries on the PBC agenda to identify the best forms of collaboration with the PBC in their active efforts to ensure a dynamic partnership.

We appreciate the Secretary-General's call for improving practical and country-specific tools to assess impacts and measure results, ensuring that tools are adapted to emerging needs in countries and developing practical mechanisms to facilitate cross-configuration learning and to generate a deeper interest and commitment among the wider United Nations membership. We welcome the Secretary-General's call on the Commission to better focus its efforts on thematic issues such as job creation, women's empowerment, national reconciliation and youth, and to engage more with host Government on their priorities.

We note the Commission's engagement in Liberia on national reconciliation, electoral and constitutional reforms and the role of women as agents of change in Liberian society. We also note the Commission's efforts in Guinea to develop opportunities for employment for young people. We encourage the PBC to mobilize broader international support for the implementation of those strategies.

With regard to the Peacebuilding Fund, the United States is pleased with its progressive efforts to focus on comparative advantage. The Fund has helped to fill crucial gaps in post-crisis and post-conflict countries, such as the funding of security sector reform and pensions for retiring military officers in Guinea.

Given increased requests for longer-term funding, the Secretariat will need to redouble its efforts to ensure that Peacebuilding Fund financing continues to fill gaps that other donors are not able to address. This applies equally to the Immediate Response Facility and to the Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility. We continue to support the ongoing review of the Joint Steering Committee mechanism to ensure that these mechanisms reflect broad national ownership, including within civil society and other key constituencies, such as key opposition groups, youth and women; perform swiftly in the interests of timely impact; and provide for monitoring and accountability.

We also commend the Peacebuilding Fund's efforts in areas with demonstrated impact, such as security sector reform and reintegration programmes. We recommend that the Fund seek more creative ways to enhance impact in all areas of operation and continue its efforts to work in concert with international partners, including the development banks, the Group of Seven Plus, and New Deal partners.

Mr. Langeland (Norway): I would like to echo others in thanking the Secretary-General and the Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for their comprehensive reports (A/67/711 and A/67/715). Norway fully concurs with the observation in the report of the Commission that in 2012 we saw both the potential and the limitations of the Commission.

It is obvious that there have been positive developments in some of the countries on the agenda of

the Commission, while others are unfortunately moving backwards. This mixed record illustrates yet again that peacebuilding is a difficult process that takes time and involves many risks. We must be patient and not assume there are quick fixes. It is evident that patience also requires political will. Norway is therefore pleased that the fundamental importance of peacebuilding was recognized during the high-level segment of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

One important comparative advantage of the PBC is indeed the more long-term and sustained efforts to support countries in consolidating peace and seeking economic progress and sustainable development. In doing so, the PBC must support national ownership of the peace process and reconciliation. At the same time, it is imperative that these processes be inclusive and involve all sectors of society.

It is obvious that violent conflicts are not solved or settled in a just and sustainable manner if women are not part of the process. There is a growing awareness of the role of women in peacebuilding, and we must ensure that the seven-point action plan for gender-responsive peacebuilding is fully implemented. Failing to move forward on the action plan would be a costly mistake that we cannot afford to make.

National ownership is a key objective of the initiative on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict. Norway is pleased that the Organizational Committee has in its meetings expressed strong support for the initiative, which will enable us to develop new ways of cooperation and partnerships in supporting countries emerging from conflicts.

Norway applauds the efforts of the Commission to forge stronger partnerships with all relevant actors, not least in relation to the international financial institutions. While these have proved to be more difficult, we must also seek to continue efforts to engage and partner with foundations, philanthropic organizations and the private sector.

Partnerships are essential to resource mobilization, which was a priority for the PBC in 2012. In addressing the question of resource mobilization, Norway reiterates its appreciation of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The Fund's focus on countries low on the radar, its swiftness and willingness to take risk, and its large donor base constitute the Fund's main strengths and added value. But we must keep in mind that PBF is most of all a catalytic fund; it cannot be the main funding source of a peacebuilding process in a country.

While Norway continues to urge traditional donors to maintain or preferably increase their financial contributions, we must also seek to engage the non-traditional donors, and in particular emerging economies. Supporting peacebuilding is a collective responsibility for the whole United Nations membership. In addition, we need to explore ways and means to enhance domestic resource mobilization in the countries concerned. Domestic resource mobilization, such as more extensive use of taxation, will enhance national ownership.

The PBC is part of the United Nations family and must consider it as a prime objective to ensure coherence and contribute to our overall objective of delivering as one. At the country level, a prime task would be to support the United Nations country teams and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. In doing so, the PBC can perform even better its political accompaniment role for the country concerned.

To conclude, the PBC has come a long way since its establishment nearly eight years ago. It has proved that it can make a difference in several of the countries on the PBC agenda, yet at the same time it is evident that more improvements can be made in the working methods of the Commission. Norway is pleased that this topic will be addressed in greater depth in 2013, and we look forward to taking part in those deliberations.

Mrs. Cizare (Ethiopia): I would like at the outset to thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting on the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/67/715) and the Secretary-General's report on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711). I also thank Ambassador Ranko Vilović, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia, for his statement. Allow me also to extend my sincere thanks to the previous Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, for presenting the PBC's annual report.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/67/PV.69).

As reflected in the Commission's report, since the conclusion of the 2010 review of the peacebuilding architecture, and through the adoption of road maps for action in 2011 and in 2012, the PBC has taken important

steps to implement key recommendations of the review. Ethiopia welcomes the new reporting format organized around focused themes. In particular, we are pleased to note that the Commission has focused on improving its relations with the United Nations principal organs, enhancing coordination, and improving its working methods. Such increased focus will undoubtedly enhance the Commission's impact in the field.

We also commend the Commission's continued efforts towards improving its role in resource mobilization, building partnerships, and supporting national ownership and capacity-building. We also hope that, in addition to the six countries under consideration, the PBC will soon be ready, upon their request, to include additional countries emerging from conflict. In this regard, we wish to note the support given from the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) to the Republic of South Sudan and Somalia.

We would like to highlight the following. First, national ownership remains critical, and to that end it is vital that the engagement frameworks and assistance of both the Commission and the Fund continue to be consistent with the nationally identified needs and priorities of post-conflict countries.

Secondly, most conflicts have occurred in developing countries, many of which have undertaken successful transitions from conflict to institution-building and development. In that challenging process, it is essential that civilian practitioners from the global South be utilized adequately. In that connection, we fully support enhanced communication and close cooperation among the Peacebuilding Fund, the Peacebuilding Commission and the African Union.

Thirdly, we fully support the focus on resource-mobilization efforts, partnerships and national aid coordination, as well as on strengthening the partnership with the World Bank and the African Development Bank. It is also important to engage foundations, philanthropic organizations and the private sector.

Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund, the total contributions to the Fund increased significantly, from $58.1 million in 2011 to $80.5 million in 2012. We thank the Member States that have made those valuable contributions, and we also thank the new donors of the Fund. It is also encouraging that approximately 88 per cent of Peacebuilding Fund projects were judged to be on track. That implies that programme effectiveness improved in 2012.

Finally, let me conclude by reiterating Ethiopia's commitment to engaging constructively in all future peacebuilding activities.

Mr. Govender (South Africa): My delegation would like to thank the President for organizing this joint debate on the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/67/711) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/715). At the outset, South Africa would like to congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Ranko Vilović, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia, on his assumption of the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Also, allow me to extend my delegation's sincere appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, for his outstanding work during his tenure as Chair of the Commission. We also thank the Chairs of the country-specific configurations and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, for their respective contributions to enhancing the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement by the representative of Tunisia (see A/67/PV.69).

The report of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Secretary-General's report on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) present an important opportunity to take stock, consolidate the gains made and identify the challenges in the context of peacebuilding. The reports point to the notable progress made by the Commission, through the Organizational Committee and the country-specific configurations, in generating greater coherence and coordination among the relevant stakeholders, both in the field and in New York.

We also note successes in the follow-up activities to the recommendations issued in the 2010 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. Those gains have translated into concrete outcomes for the countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda. While we note mixed results among the six country configurations, the prognosis in general is encouraging and confirms to us that the role of the PBC within the United Nations system is indeed a vital one and warrants the full support of all Member States.

Both reports correctly point out that national ownership is integral to any peacebuilding initiative and that the earliest possible response by the international community is key in supporting the successful transition for countries emerging from conflict. We could not agree more with the Secretary-General when he points out that the PBC provides the international community with a strategic political platform that is able to bring together the world's most influential actors in taking forward the peacebuilding agenda. We have seen, in that regard, the productive gains in Liberia and Sierra Leone, where successful multiparty elections have been held in recent years. Critical support and assistance to those processes by the PBC have contributed to those electoral processes being held at the presidential, parliamentary and local Government levels. The net effect is that the citizens of those countries have begun to realize the dividends of peace and have contributed directly to the shaping of their destinies. We have also witnessed similar progress in Burundi, where the nation-building process has transitioned through the political level and beyond to strengthening social cohesion and to the economic arena to address poverty reduction.

Disruption to the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund is indeed unfortunate, as has been the situation in Guinea-Bissau. That reminds us once more that national ownership is critical to ensuring that peacebuilding tasks and responsibilities remain on track, as we all know that the purpose for the establishment of the PBC, as well as the PBF, is to essentially work in post-conflict environments in which Governments and other national stakeholders have committed, or demonstrated a commitment, to peacebuilding. We look forward to the early resumption of the Fund's activities in Guinea-Bissau in order to build on the past gains of the country configuration.

The recent events in the Central African Republic remind us of the magnitude of the problem that the PBC and the international community have to deal with in the context of peacebuilding. The experiences in the Central African Republic are of serious concern to my delegation, especially as those events have now created a major setback to the significant gains that the country-specific configuration has made in the areas of security sector reform and the momentum that has been developing on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. We take note of the recent press statement (SC/10960) issued by the Security Council on the situation in the country and support the call by the Council for the restoration of the rule of law and constitutional order and the implementation of the Libreville agreements. We look forward to a peaceful and early resolution of the conflict.

The need for coherence, coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders, as well as among and within the United Nations system, including the principal organs, cannot be overemphasized. We firmly support the Secretary-General's view that the strengthening of relations with the Security Council must be accorded priority, especially in view of the fact that five of the six countries on the agenda of the PBC were referred by the Security Council. We commend the ongoing interaction through the hosting of informal dialogues and briefings made to the Council by country-specific configurations and encourage further collaboration in that regard.

We believe that there is significant potential for international civilian capacities, especially those from the global South, to enhance capacity-building at the national level for those States emerging from conflict, in accordance with their specific needs. The African Union's post-conflict reconstruction and development body is one of the continent's mechanisms designed to curb the severity and repeated nature of conflicts in Africa, as well as to bring about sustained development.

The Peacebuilding Commission offers a good platform to foster an exchange of experiences between countries on the agenda and other countries that have undergone a successful transition from conflict to development. We agree once more with the Secretary-General's report that particular attention in that regard should be paid to facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation.

Finally, South Africa recently had the privilege of being elected to the PBC. We remain committed to supporting the work of the PBC and, to that end, we will actively contribute in the Commission's respective structures.

Mrs. Niang (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/67/PV.69) and welcomes the holding of today's joint plenary debate on agenda items 31 and 107 relating to the report (A/67/715) of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the report (A/67/711) of the

Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), respectively.

Today's debate provides us with the opportunity to consider the achievements of this United Nations intergovernmental advisory body, which plays a unique role in restoring and building peace in the countries on its agenda. I take this opportunity to thank the outgoing Chair of the PBC, Mr. Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, for his work in leading our Commission. I also wish every success to Mr. Ranko Vilović, Permanent Representative of Croatia, as he carries out his mission, and assure him of our full support.

Today's debate is timely because it is being held in a very favourable environment, where the efforts being undertaken in the context of peacebuilding have made a large contribution to the rebuilding of most of the countries involved. Indeed, besides Guinea-Bissau, where the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund have been indefinitely suspended as a result of the military coup d'état, the PBC has supported the countries on its agenda by adopting more inclusive processes in building peace.

It is apparent from the consideration of the 2012 report on the PBF that the progress made to date has not lived up to our expectations. Many challenges remain, involving, inter alia, the generation of job opportunities for vulnerable groups, particularly young people and women, the restoration of the decentralized administration, and the operation of the Government, as well as the provision of public services. In the report, the two priority strategic spheres are the revitalization of the economy and the restoration of administrative services.

Fortunately, the studies conducted by the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) have produced recommendations that I would like to dwell on here, including programmes for reform of the security sector, which should be more closely integrated into national dialogue programmes for peacebuilding, justice and reconciliation. The PBF should be more flexible in order to support programmes relating to reintegration when funding ends and the programmes have not yet been completed. It should also continue to recognize the value of the delivery of services by the Government not only in distributing peace dividends, but also in improving those services' ability to react to the concerns of communities affected by conflict, while emphasizing programmes seeking to reduce long-standing inequalities. Furthermore, the PBC has fully played its role as an advisory body by strengthening its collaboration with the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly and by enhancing its links with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Regarding civilian capacity-building in post-conflict situations, we welcome the efforts of the PBSO in Côte d'Ivoire, in particular relating to the formulation of a strategy for security sector reform in collaboration with the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire. Thus, as the report on the PBF emphasizes, a group of officials travelled to Senegal in order to learn more about promoting women's involvement in security sector reform programmes, which we consider to be a good example of South-South cooperation that should be continued.

National ownership and the building of the capacities conflict-affected States should therefore remain at the heart of peacebuilding activities if we wish to find a sustained response to those countries' needs. It is all the more necessary given that, for peacebuilding to be efficient, it must provide those countries with the capacities needed for them to recover and take control of their own affairs. Furthermore, in restating the central role of national ownership at the heart of peacebuilding efforts, the PBC has shown its maturity and commitment to the countries on its agenda.

The support it gives to that process, however, would not be effective without the firm leadership of national actors in the countries involved. It is therefore important to ensure that peacebuilding planning is focused on the demands and needs of those countries. That involves taking into account the priorities defined by the States themselves and also the implementation of viable policies seeking to achieve the empowerment of national actors, particularly young people.

Lastly, regarding gender-specific matters, we encourage the PBC to enhance gender equality and promote the empowerment of women in the various missions, as advocated in the reports of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict (A/67/499) and on women's participation in peacebuilding (A/65/354).

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): I thank the President for convening today's debate. We thank the Permanent

Representative of Bangladesh for guiding the work of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in 2012. We extend our best wishes to the present Chair, the Permanent Representative of Croatia, for carrying forward the work of the PBC this year. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/67/PV.69)

The most recent session of the PBC reinforced the need for coherent, efficient and predictable responses by the United Nations to the peacebuilding needs of the countries emerging from conflict. The session further underscored the following three key concepts of peacebuilding: first, giving priority to targeted areas, focusing on security sector reform, local capacity-building and economic revitalization; secondly, sharpening the emphasis on development aspects of peacebuilding; and thirdly, refining the peacekeeping-peacebuilding nexus for a coherent and seamless response by the United Nations in the aftermath of a conflict.

The most recent session of the PBC coincided with the release of the Secretary-General's progress report on peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict (A/67/499). The Secretary-General's emphasis on inclusiveness, institution-building and sustained international support for peacebuilding conforms to the lessons learned from the deliberations in the PBC Organizational Committee and its country-specific configurations.

The unique structure of the PBC provides an ideal platform for various stakeholders to consider and implement United Nations peacebuilding endeavours. There is a need to harness the role of the PBC in conceiving and implementing peacebuilding-related mandates and activities. The Organizational Committee should also undertake meaningful discussions on finding a niche for the PBC in decision-making processes related to United Nations peacebuilding. Our ongoing focus on the PBC's working methods is therefore particularly encouraging.

This January, under Pakistan's presidency, the Security Council adopted resolution 2086 (2013), which underscored the centrality of the PBC as an advisory and resource mobilization body for peacebuilding. Pakistan steered resolution 2086 (2013) and had it adopted by the Security Council. In so doing, we were guided by our experience as a founding member of the PBC and a leading troop-contributor to United Nations peacekeeping. The resolution clarified and reinforced the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It helped build stronger partnerships for a collective response to the challenges of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It is a matter of great satisfaction that resolution 2086 (2013) was adopted by consensus, sponsored by all Council members, and appreciated widely by the general membership.

The 2010 review of the PBC led to the alignment of the strategic framework for countries on the agenda of the PBC with respective national priorities and policies, under complete local ownership. We express our satisfaction that country-specific configurations are fine-tuning their roles and undertaking important initiatives in resource mobilization through international financial institutions and non-United Nations sources of funding.

The success of the United Nations peacebuilding endeavours hinges on adequate financial resources. The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) provides the seed money in a post-conflict situation to attract other sources of funding. The PBF is therefore an essential component of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

Pakistan has been contributing to the PBF. We agree with the apt characterization of contributions to the PBF as investments in peace. It is essential to expand the base of donors to the PBF in order to unlock the catalysing role of this important instrument. The Member States and the Secretariat need to provide the PBF with resources and operational flexibility in order to make it more efficient.

Besides finances, peacebuilding initiatives require adequate human resources. The Secretary-General's initiative on civilian capacities is important in identifying expertise to be tailored to specific needs in post-conflict peacebuilding. The civilian capacity process should stand up to intergovernmental scrutiny, avoid duplication of roles, and be compliant with United Nations rules and procedure.

In conclusion, we reiterate our strong commitment and support to United Nations peacebuilding endeavours. We share the hope that our collective peacebuilding efforts will benefit all conflict-affected peoples of the world.

Mr. Kydyrov (Kyrgyzstan): Let me at the outset express our full support for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and its recent report

(A/67/715). I also thank the Secretary-General for his report on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711). I will focus my statement on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and its cooperation with my country.

In recent years, the Peacebuilding Fund has become one of the most important instruments of the international community in addressing the challenges of the transition from conflict to sustainable development in many countries, including my own. The PBF's response to the inter-ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan in 2010 was timely and important. Those initial stabilization measures helped Kyrgyzstan to continue the process of recovery from the violence and create the first parliamentary democracy in the region.

During the more than two years since the conflict, the PBF has allocated to Kyrgyzstan a total amount of $10 million under the Immediate Response Facility. The projects have helped my Government to engage women and youth in the peacebuilding process and to rebuild confidence in public institutions. The PBF has also piloted innovative approaches to community reconciliation that encourage communities in conflict to work together in managing shared resources, and specifically the water resources in the south of the country. Most importantly, the PBF has helped to bring the United Nations system, its partners and my Government closer together around a common set of priorities.

The 2012 evaluation by the Peacebuilding Support Office of the activities of the PBF in Kyrgyzstan showed that a platform to address the exclusion of certain groups from the political and economic spheres in Kyrgyzstan was formed during those two years plus. The evaluation also highlighted, however, that several activities were not as focused on peacebuilding outcomes as they could have been, and that more support should be provided to partners during the programme design stage.

Let me take this opportunity to express once again our sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General for his positive response to the letter of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic dated 26 September 2012, wherein he requested an extension of Peacebuilding Fund support, in particular for the rule of law, systems to protect human rights, the strengthening of inter-ethnic relations and the promotion of national unity. We are quite confident that the PBF, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia and the Government of Kyrgyzstan will promptly identify key areas that will need the further support of the PBF and establish a joint steering committee to provide strategic guidance to the Fund process at the country level. In this regard, a group of experts from the Peacebuilding Support Office recently visited Kyrgyzstan to identify areas in need of additional assistance from the Fund.

We would also like to inform the Assembly that a State agency for local Government and inter-ethnic relations in the Kyrgyz Republic was formed, and that a concept for strengthening national unity and inter-ethnic relations in the Kyrgyz Republic was approved by the Defence Council of Kyrgyzstan only a few days ago.

Our experience demonstrates the important role of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture in supporting peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries, and once again highlights the PBF's proven worth as a unique, quick-response, flexible and strategic funding instrument for early peacebuilding support. It is encouraging to learn from the Secretary-General's report that, in response to the Fund's continually strengthening performance, donors contributed more than $80 million in 2012, up from $58 million in 2011.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Kyrgyzstan highly values the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and the existing level of cooperation with the Peacebuilding Support Office, and looks forward to its further development.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.